



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
PORTLAND DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 2946  
PORTLAND, OREGON 97208-2946

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

December 5, 2007

Operations Division  
Regulatory Branch  
Corps No. NWP-2007-900

Mr. Andrew Gilpin  
Environment and Utilities, Manager  
Evraz Oregon Steel Mills, Inc.  
14400 North Rivergate Boulevard  
Portland, Oregon 97203

Dear Mr. Gilpin:

Reference is made to your Department of the Army (DA) permit application submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) requesting authorization to place riprap along 1470 linear feet of the Willamette River. The application has been assigned Corps ID NWP-2007-900.

Based on a site visit and subsequent agency meeting, the Corps has the following concerns with the project as proposed:

1. **Project Design.** The Corps is concerned that alternative methods for bank stabilization were not fully explored. The purpose of the project is to stabilize the bank to prevent further erosion of a slag/soil fill located mostly above the ordinary high water elevation. The application states that the bankline is artificially steep, resulting in further erosion. Can the bank be sloped to a more stable grade, allowing incorporation of bioengineering methods of bank stabilization? The Corps and the resource agencies would like to see information related to the feasibility of bioengineering methods for stabilizing the bank in this reach.
2. **Mitigation.** The proposed mitigation would not adequately compensate for the proposed impacts. The area proposed as mitigation would receive the same bank treatment, i.e. riprap, as the other areas of the project area. Further, The Corps believes the proposed mitigation design would impair an area that is functioning and stable. This area contains a large number of mature trees, which are lacking along this section of the river.

In addition to these issues, the agencies listed below expressed the following concerns with the project as proposed:

Environmental Protection Agency. EPA is concerned about the permanence of the measure design in relation to: (1) contamination remaining on site under the “cover”; (2) permeability of the “cover”; and (3) placement of “cover” material. It appears that the vast amount of material and area of the “cover” may preclude removing it in the future should it be determined that this remedy interferes with potential future remedy designs for the protection of human health and the environment. Additionally, the data shows that the contamination is quite heterogeneous (i.e., there is no specific source area), which would corroborate with the regrading and movement of contaminated material over time at this site. Thus, unsampled areas may contain high concentrations of contaminants that will not be removed. Consequently, EPA is concerned about the lack of contaminated bank material removed from the site in combination with the permanence of the design. Further, the design should provide an analysis of the potential for residual contamination in the river bank to leach into the river sediments.

While the design did consider possible in-water remedies (e.g., dredging, capping), the placement of the “cover” may prevent other upland source control remedies (e.g., groundwater containment) from being implemented in the future that may be necessary to reduce in-water risk and prevent recontamination of the remedy. This design should illustrate how it would not interfere with other possible upland remedies (e.g., installation of sheetpile wall, slurry wall, reactive barrier, etc.).

National Marine Fisheries Service. We are concerned that the design does not adequately address source control, and may preclude future source control options. The design only addresses the bank erosion pathway of PCBs into the Willamette River. Other pollutants present on the site have not been addressed, and the movement of dissolved contaminants into the river will not be halted by riprap. At a minimum, a study is needed to analyze for residual contamination in the bank that could move into the river.

Not enough is known about other future remedies for stormwater and groundwater pathways. The placement of riprap may impede their implementation. Possible designs need to be discussed, and an analysis included as to why their implementation is compatible with the current design.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services

Please provide a response to these concerns and any other information you feel may be helpful in order to fully justify the project should also be submitted at this time. If you require further information or have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at the letterhead address or by telephone at (503) 808-4387.

Sincerely,

Kathryn L. Harros  
Project Manager, Regulatory Branch

Copy Furnished:

Environmental Protect Agency (Kristine Koch, Seattle office)  
National Marine Fisheries Service (Nancy Munn)  
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (Jennifer Sutter)  
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (Mischa Connine)  
Oregon Department of State Lands (Mike McCabe)  
City of Portland, Bureau of Environmental Services (Jennifer Goodridge)  
Mr. Derik Vowels, ENSR, d.b.a. The RETEC Group